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Draft Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load

Comment On: EPA-R03-OW-2010-0736-0001
Clean Water Act Section 303(d): Notice for the Public Review of the Draft Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for the Chesapeake Bay

Document: EPA-R03-OW-2010-0736-0242
Comment submitted by C. Hebert

Submitter Information

General Comment

Having been born and raised in the Chesapeake Bay Region, I care deeply about the plight of the bay. I can remember competing in essay contests about the importance of cleaning up the Bay in elementary school, yet the Bay is not significantly better off now than it was then.

We have been waiting a long time to clean up the bay with voluntary efforts. What we need is a mandatory approach to enforcing pollution limits that levels the playing field across states.

A perfect example is of Mattawoman Creek, which mirrors the plight of the Bay at large. Since 2005, Mattawoman has had an approved TMDL, but it has not been enforced and has not stopped harmful sprawl development from threatening the Matawoman watershed and the Bay. Therefore, Mattawoman presents a case study on why a change of approach is needed. Warnings about Mattawoman's vulnerability to development have been issued for at least twenty years. Now, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources is reporting that the warnings are coming true: a decline in the abundance of fish and number of fish species has been detected in the last few years.

Mattawoman provides community benefits like clean water, recreation and wildlife. It also is an important element of the local bass fishery, which sustainably pumps tens of millions of dollars into Maryland commerce annually!

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If we can't protect one of Bay's most productive tributaries, especially now that it is showing signs of decline, how can we expect to clean up the Bay at large? Please enforce mandatory TMDL limits so we can finally turn things around for the Bay.

Sincerely,
Colin Hebert